Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, PFOR, GR

SUBJ: ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO GREECE

REF: ATHENS 3459

1. IN COURSE OF ECONOMIC COUNSELOR'S DISCUSSION WITH COORDINATION MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS ON NEW EXPORT-IMPORT BANK POLICIES (REPORTED SEPTEL), PAPALIGOURAS EXPRESSED HIS "DISAPPOINTMENT" WITH CONTINUED DELAY IN DECISION ON U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AS DISCUSSED EARLIER THIS YEAR. HE EXPRESSED HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS DECISION WAS CLOSELY RELATED TO U.S. MILITARY AID TO TURKEY, BUT UNDERSCORED AGAIN HIS GOVERNMENT'S SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT GREECE'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION. PAPALIGOURAS ALSO NOTED THAT, ACCORDING TO HIS INFORMATION, PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS DID NOT DIRECTLY RAISE THE SUBJECT OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IN HIS TALK WITH PRESIDENT FORD IN BRUSSELS, BUT RAISED THE MATTER OBLIQUELY BY REFERRING TO GREECE'S SERIOUS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS THIS YEAR.

2. IN REPLY, ECONOMIC COUNSELOR NOTED THAT, AS MINISTER WAS AWARE, THE COMPLEXITY OF THE ISSUES INVOLVED HAD NOT ACILITATED ARRIVING AT A QUICK DECISION EARLIER THIS YEAR ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO GREECE. HE ASSURED PAPALIGOURAS, HOWEVER, THAT THE GREEK REQUEST REMAINS UNDER SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION IN WASHINGTON AND THAT WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO CONVEY FURTHER NEWS TO HIM ON THIS MATTER IN THE NEAR CONFIDENTIAL

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FUTURE.

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